

6/23/03

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Dear Michigan Supreme Court Justices;

There definitely needs to be some revisions made on the issue of how parenting time affects support payments. The court order for the divorce I was involved in states that I am to "enjoy 4 days of visitation with my Daughter every other month." That is a really balanced (though very limited) arrangement. It would be great if I could actually see my Daughter regularly, like the agreement outlines visitation. Unfortunately, that has not happened. I have an ex-wife who says "school is too important for my Daughter to miss that many days." Yet, when you look at school vacation days as options, she would only have to miss a maximum of 8 school days a year.

Lately, I am: being denied parent visitations, dealing with a lack of communication, and a rapid blackmailing of my Daughter to make her think I am a bad parent. All the while, my support payments regularly roll in. I have not been late with any payments to my knowledge. There really is no way I could even have a clue as to how that money is being spent these days. It is still taking a healthy bite out of my paychecks though.

Using the Friend of the Court system is a bunch of slow red tape I have had little success with. In order to even get anything started, I have to file a "Parenting Time Custody Complaint." This results in an ordered set of remedies if they determine your complaint is valid. Here is the 1st remedy to be applied: "Make up parenting time- The process to apply make up parenting time is to send a notice informing that make up parenting time will be applied unless the parties object within 21 days." So, it appears all one has to do is object. The remedy after that is a joint meeting. Expenses pick up from there.

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There needs to be a way for caseworkers to have a little more liberty to get some fairness working in these agreements. For many cases fairness is probably there in paper, but not in actions. Using support payment penalization seems like an obvious first step to get a parent committed to the visitation plan the court decided on.

Those in other families may think "come on, what's the big deal?" But, when you have an ex who constantly harbors bitterness & argues, rarely answering the phone, it is at the very least - frustrating. A situation like mine can quickly become unfair.

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